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CALL ON FEDERAL EXPERTS FOR
AID IN STOPPING BIRD DAMAGE

Damage by crows in almond orchards, by gulls on golf courses, and by horned larks in sugar-beet fields recently caused citizens of four California counties to appeal to the Federal Government for aid, reports the Bureau of Biological Survey, U. S. Department of Agriculture.

Horned Larks Destroy Beets

On a single farm in Riverside County, says the report, horned larks in fields where sugar beets were being grown for seed production caused losses amounting to \$1,350. The birds pulled up some of the small seedlings as they came from the ground and even stripped the leaves from growing plants. These beets, it is explained, were of a special curly top resistant strain, U. S. No. 1, developed by the Federal Bureau of Plant Industry. The loss of the crop in these fields is a backset to the increased propagation of this variety.

Control methods developed by the Biological Survey have made it possible in numerous cases to reduce damage of this type, says W. L. McAtee, in charge of the Division of Food Habits Research. These methods, it is further pointed out, are designed to minimize danger to innocent birds, which often results when specially trained men are not available.

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Gulls Damage Golf Courses

Golf-course repairs costing \$1,000 per month were reported to the Bureau from a club in San Mateo and San Francisco Counties as a result of damage by gulls. Huge flocks, wrote the club's secretary, settle on a half dozen of the fairways and do serious damage daily to the course; the birds "with almost human intelligence" remove the replaced divots, and the fairways are commencing to look "almost like a ploughed field."

Crows Destroy Almonds

On one orchard tract in Monterey County crows destroyed about one-fifth of the year's almond crop, doing damage amounting to about \$1,000, according to an estimate sent to the Biological Survey by the county agricultural commissioner.

These complaints, says the Bureau, all made during the last half of December-- are typical of demands made for the service of competent experts in controlling injurious birds. Through their knowledge of the food and other habits of the birds, the Bureau's biologists are able to devise control methods that solve the problems without endangering innocent birds, and these services are demanded in cases involving the many birds that are protected by Federal law.

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